World Diplomacy Organization

Report on Violations in the Syrian Coastal Regions

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March - April 2025

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Executive Summary

Since the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime in December 2024, Syria has entered a volatile transitional phase marked by escalating sectarian violence, particularly in the coastal regions traditionally dominated by the Alawite minority. Beginning in March 2025, a series of documented massacres and human rights violations have targeted civilians, resulting in significant loss of life and widespread displacement. This report, issued by the World Diplomacy Organization (WDO), meticulously documents these events from March to early April 2025, drawing on credible sources to provide a detailed analysis and urgent recommendations to address the crisis.

Background

Following the establishment of a transitional government under Ahmad Sharaa in January 2025, tensions between the new administration and remnants of the former Assad regime erupted into violent clashes across the coastal provinces of Latakia, Tartus, Baniyas, and Hama. These areas, historically loyal to the Assad family, became focal points for retaliatory attacks targeting the Alawite community. The violence commenced on March 6, 2025, when armed groups loyal to the former regime launched coordinated assaults on security posts, triggering a brutal response from transitional government forces and allied militias.

Key Events and Casualties

Based on reports from reputable human rights organizations such as the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), and Amnesty International, the following incidents have been documented:

1. **March 6-10, 2025: Onset of Massacres**
    - **Location:** Latakia, Tartus, Hama, Baniyas
    - **Details:** The violence began on March 6 with attacks by pro-Assad factions on security installations in Jableh and Baniyas, killing 16 government security personnel. In response, transitional government forces, supported by militias including elements of the Syrian National Army, launched widespread reprisal operations targeting civilian areas.

- **Casualties:**
  - SNHR reported 803 extrajudicial killings, including 420 civilians and disarmed fighters by government forces, and 211 civilians by Assad loyalists (SNHR Report).
  - SOHR documented 1,614 civilian deaths since March 6, predominantly in rural Latakia (e.g., al-Sheer, al-Mukhtariya, and al-Haffa) (SOHR Report).
- **Violations:** Field executions, looting, and arson, with victims buried in mass graves without religious rites.

2. **March 7, 2025: Al-Sanobar Massacre (Latakia)**
   - **Details:** Government-aligned forces attacked the village of Al-Sanobar, where over 84 bodies were documented in mass graves. Local reports suggest the toll may exceed 200. Eyewitnesses reported systematic looting and burning of homes.
   - **Casualties:** Predominantly Alawite males, with evidence of indiscriminate gunfire targeting residences (CNN Report).
3. **March 8-9, 2025: Baniyas Massacre**
   - **Details:** In the al-Qusour neighborhood, militias linked to the transitional government killed over 100 civilians, with Amnesty International investigating 32 specific cases. Witnesses reported assailants questioning victims about their sect before execution, indicating clear sectarian targeting (Amnesty Report).
   - **Casualties:** 24 men, 6 women, and 2 children, forcibly buried in mass graves.
4. **March 31 - April 3, 2025: Violence During Eid al-Fitr**
   - **Location:** Rural Tartus, Homs
   - **Details:** On the first day of Eid al-Fitr (March 31), two separate massacres occurred in Harf Namra (Tartus) and Karm al-Zaytoun (Homs), where 12 civilians were killed by gunmen affiliated with the transitional government (SNHR Report).
   - **Casualties:** 6 in Harf Namra (including village head Jawad Faris and his son) and 6 in Karm al-Zaytoun (a woman, 3 children, and 2 men).

Table of Massacres: March to April 4, 2025

The following table summarizes the documented massacres from the onset of violence in March through the present day, April 4, 2025:

Date	Location	Details	Casualties	Perpetrators	Source
March 6-10, 2025	Latakia, Tartus, Hama, Baniyas	Coordinated attacks by pro-Assad groups followed by reprisals; executions, looting, arson.	803 total (420 civilians by gov't forces, 211 by Assad loyalists); SOHR reports 1,614 total	Transitional gov't forces, Assad remnants	SNHR, SOHR

March 7, 2025	Al-Sanobar, Latakia	Massacre with field executions, looting, and burning; mass graves verified by satellite imagery.	84+ confirmed, possibly over 200	Gov't-aligned forces	CNN
March 8-9, 2025	Baniyas (al-Qusour)	Sectarian-targeted killings; victims questioned about sect before execution; mass burials.	100+ total, 32 investigated (24 men, 6 women, 2 children)	Transitional gov't militias	Amnesty
March 31, 2025	Harf Namra, Tartus	Execution of civilians during Eid al-Fitr; village head and son among victims.	6 (including Jawad Faris and his son)	Transitional gov't gunmen	SNHR
March 31, 2025	Karm al-Zaytoun, Homs	Home invasion and shooting during Eid al-Fitr; children among victims.	6 (1 woman, 3 children, 2 men)	Transitional gov't gunmen	SNHR
April 3, 2025	Rural Tartus	Additional killings reported amid ongoing coastal violence.	12 total (5 children, 2 women included)	Transitional gov't gunmen	SNHR

Perpetrators

- **Transitional Government Forces:** Include militias supported by the government, such as factions of the Syrian National Army and elements integrated from Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).
- **Assad Regime Remnants:** Armed groups loyal to the former regime, including forces linked to General Suhail al-Hassan, initiated attacks that sparked the reprisals.
- **Sectarian Nature:** Multiple testimonies confirm deliberate targeting of Alawites, with assailants using sectarian rhetoric such as "We will slaughter the Alawites," underscoring the retaliatory intent.

Humanitarian Impact

- **Displacement:** Thousands of residents, particularly from Baniyas and Latakia, have fled to remote mountain villages or the Russian Hmeimim airbase seeking safety.
- **Fear and Marginalization:** The Alawite community has expressed a "state of terror," fearing further marginalization under the new government.
- **Destruction:** Homes and properties have been destroyed, with widespread looting reported across affected areas.

Official Response

- **Transitional Government:** President Ahmad Sharaa announced the formation of an independent investigative committee on March 9, 2025, pledging accountability. However, doubts persist regarding the committee's impartiality and effectiveness.
- **International Community:**
  - The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, called for "immediate and transparent" investigations on March 9.
  - Amnesty International demanded that the massacres be classified as war crimes, pressing the government to ensure accountability (Amnesty Report).

Analysis

The events indicate a failure by the transitional government to control its forces, allowing militias to perpetrate grave violations. The persistence of violence into April 2025 highlights the fragility of the security situation and the absence of effective mechanisms to deter sectarian crimes. The sectarian nature of these violations threatens to undermine Sharaa's efforts to build an inclusive Syria, increasing the risk of prolonged instability.

Recommendations

1. **Independent Investigations:** Permit international investigators unrestricted access to affected areas to ensure transparent inquiries.
2. **Accountability:** Prosecute those responsible, including militia leaders, before fair and impartial courts.
3. **Civilian Protection:** Deploy neutral security forces to prevent further retaliatory attacks.
4. **Compensation:** Provide financial and material reparations to victims and their families.
5. **Transitional Justice:** Establish a national transitional justice commission to address both historical and recent crimes.

Conclusion

The World Diplomacy Organization documents that the violations in the Syrian coastal regions from March to April 4, 2025, have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians, predominantly Alawites, in a deeply sectarian context. Accountability and justice remain critical to breaking the cycle of violence and restoring stability. We urge the international community and the transitional government to take immediate action to protect all Syrians, regardless of sect, and to build a future grounded in justice and dignity.

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